



No. 0642/68  
12 March 1968

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## MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Preliminary Assessment of Black Shield  
Mission 6856 on [redacted]

Summary

Black Shield Mission 6856 flown on [redacted] produced no usable photography of North Vietnam, which was almost entirely cloud-covered. Parts of Laos, Cambodia, and the South Vietnamese - Cambodian border area were covered on clear photography. Good coverage was obtained of the road network leading toward Khe Sanh. Only the northern end of the A Shau valley was seen on cloud-free photography and no military activity is evident.

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Note: This memorandum was prepared by the Directorate of Intelligence.

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[redacted]  
SECRET

1. Good coverage was obtained of the Khe Sanh area and westward into Laos. The Communist road network leading toward the Khe Sanh area from Laos showed signs of moderate-to-heavy traffic. No trucks or armored vehicles were seen. Routes 9 and 92 in Laos are serviceable, and all destroyed bridges have usable by-passes. Both the northern and southern spurs of Route 92 have been extended about two nautical miles closer to Khe Sanh since the end of January.

2. Fair coverage was obtained of much of the area around Khe Sanh and enemy and allied positions there. For example, large numbers of enemy foxholes--possibly ambush sites--can be seen between the outpost on Hill #881 and the main Khe Sanh base.

3. Only the northern end of the A Shau valley was cloud-free, and no military activity or installations were visible. Route 110 into the tri-border area from Laos has been extended about five miles closer to South Vietnam.